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ABSTRACT

This guide presents individual and school-based strategies to help teachers deal with stress and burnout. The following individual strategies are briefly described: biofeedback, buddy system, childhood energy, conflict management, desensitization, dreams, exercise, humor, ideology, imaging, leaving stress behind, looking forward, making lists, meditation, mental diversions, mental health days, morning routine, nutrition, peer coaching, personal inventory for fun, refueling your tank, relaxation, responding to student concerns, self-praise, self-hypnosis, self-talk, sense of purpose, shunning the superman/superwoman image, sleep, social support, teacher mindsets, time alone, and time management. School strategies focus on the following areas: administrative support, behavioral consultation, districtwide technical assistance teams, embedded inservice training, inservice training, mentoring, organizational development, restructuring and reform, statewide technical assistance network, support networks, teacher assistance teams, teacher centers, teachers helping teachers, teacher work groups, and time restructuring. Two appendices provide additional individual and school strategies. (Contains 64 references or recommended readings.) (DB)

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Organizing Systems to Support Competent Social Behavior in Children and Youth

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Teacher Stress and Burnout

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Organizing Systems to Support Competent Social Behavior in Children and Youth

Teacher Stress & Burnout

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Introduction

Stress and burnout is an occupational hazard which all members of helping professions are exposed to, including teachers. Hendrickson (1979) defines teacher burnout as "physical, emotional, and attitudinal exhaustion" that begins with a feeling of uneasiness and mounts as the joy of teaching begins to gradually slip away. Although the symptoms of burnout may be very personal, they are generally "lack of" symptoms (McGee-Cooper, 1990). The list includes lack of:

- energy
- enthusiasm
- motivation
- zest
- ideas
- permission to play
- humor
- joy
- satisfaction
- interest
- dreams for life
- concentration
- self-confidence

Some teachers leave the profession because they cannot cope with the stress inherent in the job (see results of a Virginia study on stress and burnout detailed on page xx). Others burn out but stay on the job, counting the days until weekends and ultimately, their retirement. Another group of teachers who stay in the profession learn coping skills that enable them to face the stresses involved in their work and to grow with them (Hendrickson, 1979).

A vital key in coping with burnout is the realization that it is not something that happens only once in a lifetime. "It can creep into our lives again and again. If we learn to recognize our symptoms, we can catch it before great damage has been done. Then we can regain our balance quickly instead of needing a longer recovery period" (McGee-Cooper, 1990, p. 172).

Teacher Stress and Burnout is the fourth document in the series *Organizing Systems to Support Competent Social Behavior in Children and Youth* to be published by the WRRC. Other titles in the same series include *Model Programs and Services, Prevention,* and *Interventions*. The series seeks to examine and analyze current thinking and best strategies for:

- Promoting good mental health and socially competent behaviors among students;

- Preventing the development of emotional/behavioral disabilities and student involvement in gangs and violent actions by using strategies such as screening and early intervention, schoolwide discipline plans, and positive alternatives to violence and gang activities;

- Developing programs to meet the needs of students with emotional/behavioral disabilities as well as those at risk for developing these disabilities at the district, building, and classroom level; and

- Addressing the issues of stress and burnout among teachers who work with students with emotional/behavioral disabilities.

This document is intended to give teachers and other school staff members a variety of strategies to help them cope with the occupational stress and burnout associated with teaching. We have included, in alphabetical order, a short introduction to 31 individual strategies—ranging from *BIOFEEDBACK* to *TIME MANAGEMENT*—and 15 school strategies—ranging from *ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT* to *TIME RESTRUCTURING*—recommended as helpful in coping with stress and burnout. More detailed explanations of these strategies may be referenced through cited sources.

No one prescription for coping with the stress of teaching will fit the needs of all teachers; coping begins with "an awareness of symptoms and causes and a commitment to change" (Cedoline, 1982, p. 128). Each individual teacher will need to find the unique combination of individual strategies that helps him or her manage stress and maintain physical and psychological well being. Schools which recognize the needs for administrative support, teaming, decision making, mentoring and other safeguards against teacher stress and burnout also contribute to the well-being and longevity of staff members.

Rockwell (1993) contends that burnout *can* be avoided. "Not everyone is a velvet-padded brick. Not everyone needs to be," she writes. "A teacher's style emerges from a creative blending of learned techniques and individual personality. It is important for each teacher to be aware of his or her own personal style. In spite of all we know about behavior management, the real growth occurs through relationships" (p. 57). Rockwell's chapter on "Personal Notes," which combines insight into the art of teaching (and surviving) students with behavior disorders with practical strategies to prevent burnout, has been reprinted on pages xx of Appendix A.

Fink and Janssen (1993) recommend that individual coping strategies and skills for managing stress and burnout be taught as part of teacher training for preservice teachers who anticipate working with behavioral disorders. As more students with emotional and behavioral disorders are placed in regular classrooms, all aspiring teachers may benefit by learning ways to maintain their physical and psychological well being in the face of stress before they enter the teaching profession.

The use of effective interventions with students can help reduce occupational stress and burnout among teachers. The companion *Interventions* document in this series describes 77 classroom and seven school-based interventions which have proven effective with many students, especially those who have emotional/behavioral problems.

WHAT TEACHERS SAY ABOUT STRESS AND BURNOUT

A study of 42 special education teachers from Virginia who decided not to return for their teaching positions for the 1991-92 school year indicated that stress was one of the leading factors in their decision to leave the profession (Krause, 1993). Other leading causes of leaving the profession listed by the teachers were stress-related as well, including lack of resources, lack of time, excessive meetings, large class sizes, lack of assistance, lack of support, and hostile parents.

Pullis (1992) sampled 244 teachers of behaviorally disordered students to determine how occupational stress affected their lives. The major sources of occupational stress identified by these teachers (in ranked order of importance) were:

- Inadequate discipline policies of the school
- Attitudes and behavior of administrators
- Evaluations by administrators/supervisors
- Attitudes and behavior of other teachers/professionals
- Work overload
- Poor career opportunities
- Low status of the teaching profession
- Lack of recognition for good teaching
- Loud, noisy students
- Dealing with parents

The major effects of stress identified by the teacher sample (in ranked order of importance) included:

- Feeling exhausted
- Feeling frustrated
- Feeling overwhelmed
- Carrying stress home
- Feeling guilty about not doing enough
- Feeling irritable

The strategies teachers reported they use most often to cope with stress (in ranked order of importance) were:

- Doing relaxing activities
- Organizing time and setting priorities
- Maintaining diet and exercise
- Discussing problems with professional colleagues
- Taking a day off

When asked what schools might do to help relieve teacher stress, the most frequently mentioned strategies (in ranked order of importance) were:

- Allowing time for teachers to collaborate/talk
- Providing more workshop/inservices/advanced courses
- Providing more verbal praise/reinforcement/respect for the job
- Providing more support
- Providing more paraprofessionals/support staff/clerical assistance
- Providing more educational opportunities to learn about students with behavioral disorders and program options
- Building better communication and decision-making involvement with administrators.

Individual Strategies

BIOFEEDBACK

Biofeedback is an assisted means of awareness and change of bodily functions that are within your control (Cedoline, 1982). Biofeedback equipment measures factors such as heart rate, blood pressure, brain waves, and skin temperature. Your five senses serve as monitors during the biofeedback process. While you practice relaxation techniques, biofeedback equipment gives immediate feedback to help identify the techniques that are the most relaxing for your individual bodily functions. Any bodily function that can be monitored can be changed as you learn to recognize your individual physiology and changes in your body through the biofeedback process. Once you have learned the most effective relaxation techniques, you can proceed without equipment. At least during the early stages of biofeedback training, the process should take place under qualified supervision.

BUDDY SYSTEM

A more informal and less expensive method of providing a support system and camaraderie for first-year teachers than the *MENTORING* (see page 15) process is the creation of a buddy system. A more experienced teacher becomes a "buddy" to a first-year teacher to offer support through the school year. A buddy is "any willing, successful teacher with good listening skills and compassion. Once appointed by the principal, the only necessary training for the 'buddy' would be a review of school procedures, available resources, and an awareness of common problems experienced by first-year teachers" (Hamlin & Haring, 1988, p. 126).

CHILDHOOD ENERGY

As we grow up, we often leave behind many of the energizing characteristics of childhood, losing our capacity to play. This loss leaves little room for "unstructured fun, spontaneity, and relaxation" in our lives (McGee-Cooper, 1990). But retaining many of those characteristics of childhood can be very positive for adults coping with the stresses inherent in the world of work. Relearning the elements of play that come naturally to children but are often phased out of our adult lives can be energizing and help us cope with stressful situations. Playing can help open "blocked thinking" and trigger creative ideas and solutions as well as release tension. "When we validate our playful self by taking time to listen to and fulfill

wishes and dreams, we bring back to life our optimistic, outrageous, enthusiastic, little-kid energy" (McGee-Cooper, 1990, p. 58). The "Characteristics of Childhood" and "Action Items" reprinted on pages 37, 41, & 45 in Appendix A list and describe how the rediscovery of childhood wonder and curiosity can renew energy and stimulate fresh thinking to meet the demands and stresses of adulthood if we will but let the child within us live.

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

Conflicts among administrators, staff members, and/or students can contribute to the stress of teaching. Openly discussing conflicts with the individuals involved, actively listening when working through conflicts, and using "I" messages that are not accusatory or evaluative (see Communication section of *Interventions* document in this series) can promote openness and resolution to conflict (Sparks & Hammond, 1981).

DESENSITIZATION

Desensitization is "programmed relearning" that utilizes relaxing conditions combined with rehearsal of progressively more difficult situations to help "reprogram" your reaction to stressful situations (Cedoline, 1982). Beginning in a relaxed state, you visualize and then rehearse the stressful situation step by step, each time gradually reducing the anxiety. Like other relaxation processes, desensitization is more effective when practiced often.

DREAMS

Dreaming is a safe and energizing way to test your options for the future (McGee-Cooper, 1990). Dreaming is also "the first step toward programming your brain to produce original solutions" (McGee-Cooper, 1990, p. 28). Some people's dreams may include very challenging visions that expand the imagination while others will dream more practical, obtainable dreams. Without some kind of inspiring dream, however, life becomes less meaningful and everyday stresses more difficult to confront.

EXERCISE

A regular exercise routine can help prevent many illnesses and diseases often associated with stress, tension, and anxiety. Exercise can help you reduce and cope more effectively with stress. It also helps to reduce fatigue and improve your capability to perform daily tasks (Greenberg, 1984). The physiological changes your body goes through under stress are brought back into balance by physical activity. A minimum of 20 to 40 minutes a day of non-stressed aerobic exercise is recommended (McGee-Cooper, 1990).

An exercise program should be individualized to be effective. A well-rounded exercise program will focus on six aspects of fitness: balance, flexibility, agility, strength, power, and endurance.

Some school staffs have formed exercise groups which meet before or after school to participate in aerobics or calisthenics. Such groups provide teachers and administrators an opportunity to meet casually and get to know each other in a different context than their customary educational roles. Physical education teachers may serve as natural leaders of these exercise groups (Greenberg, 1984).

HUMOR

Allowing yourself to step back and laugh at yourself, others, or situations can help relieve stress. "Recognizing and using the elements of humor can make the most serious episode more palatable and less threatening. One of the most healthy types of humor is the ability to laugh at oneself. Most of us know that trauma is resolved when, after a harrowing experience, we can look back at it and find humor in it" Cedoline, 1982, p. 151).

IDEOLOGY

Henrickson (1979) recommends: "Remember the ideological reasons for which you entered the teaching profession. If you can grasp hold of them and relate them to your professional goals, you'll have more energy with which to wage your fight against burnout" (p. 39).

IMAGING

Imaging, or visualizing, is a powerful, energizing process that allows you to become aware of and guide the mental images you create. Imaging can boost energy and performance while building a positive mental set as a strong defense against the negative effects of stress (McGee-Cooper, 1990). Learning to "image" involves relaxing your body, clearing your mind, and imprinting visualizations of success in your mind, ending with a "mental vacation" of relaxation and playing as a reward. Positive imaging is especially important at the very beginning and ending hours of the day when the mind is still in the "alpha window" stage and is most susceptible to imprinting. An imaging activity for returning home from work recommended by McGee-Cooper (1990) has been reprinted on page 49 in Appendix A.

LEAVING STRESS BEHIND

Hendrickson (1979) recommends: "Learn to decompress between the time you leave the school building and the time you arrive home. Leave behind the conflicts you are involved with at school. Keep home a place to enjoy. Share the good things you experience at school; recounting the successful times will help you focus on them" (p. 39).

LOOKING FORWARD

During times of stress it may help to keep your spirits up to look forward to an upcoming event (Cedoline, 1982). When you feel good about your involvement in activities outside of school, these positive feelings will be reflected in your work environment at school. Reflecting upon positive memories of special times in the past can also serve as a temporary diversion from the stress of the present.

MAKING LISTS

Carballo, Cohen, Danoff, Gale, Meyer, & Orton (1990) advise: "Make lists of things to do today, this week, this quarter, etc., to help you keep your priorities straight. Keep a list of things you would like to do next year or try a different way."

MEDITATION

Meditation is a relaxation technique which reduces blood pressure and the need for oxygen through a calm, restful thought process (Greenberg, 1984). Although there are many different methods of meditation, most produce deep muscle and mental relaxation. Concentration is an essential part of the meditation process. "The mind's natural flow from one idea to another is quieted by the individual's concentration" (Humphrey, 1986, p. 110). Practicing meditation requires a calm, quiet environment. Once mastered, the meditation process provides relaxation in a short period of time. Those who meditate can derive feelings of physical, mental, and emotional refreshment from the process. It can contribute to psychological stability as well as reducing anxiety.

MENTAL DIVERSIONS

When anticipating a stressful situation, you can become more confident and less fearful by allowing yourself to indulge in a totally different mental activity (Cedoline, 1982). Spending a few minutes thinking of something positive can help displace worries and fear. This type of diversion can also help you remember that everything is relative and that stress can sometimes be overinflated in importance.

MENTAL HEALTH DAYS

Hendrickson (1979) recommends: "When you feel particularly depressed, take a day or two off. Called mental-health days and recognized as legitimate by many school districts, these should be used to pamper yourself" (p. 39).

MORNING ROUTINE

"Your morning routine is the metaphorical launching pad for your day. It can determine the kind of mental set you arrive at work with, the amount of energy reserves you have on hand, and even the degree of productivity and success you experience throughout the day" (McGee-Cooper, 1990, p. 316). Your morning routine might consist of a beginning imaging session upon waking; exercise; a nutritious breakfast; a stress-free positive mental set; a rewarding commute to work; and an early arrival to begin the day in a stress-free mental state.

NUTRITION

How, what, and where you eat can either add to or reduce the negative effects of stress. "Effective stress resistance is contingent, in part, on personal nutrition. Good nutritional habits can enable you to cope better with day-to-day stresses and strains" (Greenberg, 1984, p. 104). Limiting consumption of salt, sugar, fat, cholesterol, and caffeine while making a conscious choice of eating a variety of whole grains, fresh fruits and vegetables, and other nutritious foods to make a well-balanced diet can give you more energy and strong defenses against disease, especially when coupled with regular exercise (Greenberg, 1984). Eating in a calm, relaxed atmosphere instead of "on the run" can also contribute to better digestion.

- spiritual growth
- intimate relationships
- experiencing joy and fun
- relationships with friends and family
- interests and hobbies
- vacations
- a sense of purpose

The Action Item reprinted on page 57 in Appendix A entitled "The Cure: Refueling Your Tank" is intended to indicate which of these areas need more time and attention. To replenish energy, McGee-Cooper recommends finding creative ways to bring your lowest-rated factors into play, starting with modest goals to insure success.

RELAXATION

Relaxation helps to fight the harmful effects of stress and improves our well-being medically, physically, and emotionally (Greenberg, 1984, p. 139). Relaxation helps counteract increased blood pressure, pulse rate, and other bodily functions that increase with stress and allows us to regain equilibrium and a calm, peaceful state. There are many relaxation techniques available, including *MEDITATION* (see page 5), *BIOFEEDBACK* (see page 1), massages, *SELF-HYPNOSIS* (see page 9), warm baths, *TIME ALONE* (see page 12), music, hobbies, short vacations, and time with friends. You must find your own combination of relaxation methods and personal stress-reducing rituals that are effective for you. Developing a relaxation ritual involves identifying "pressure points" so that relaxation patterns can be build around them. For the relaxation ritual to become a habit it must be practiced until it is a natural part of daily functioning (Greenberg).

RESPONDING TO STUDENT CONCERNS

Responding to the concerns voiced by students is one proactive method of reducing teacher stress and burnout. "Because students are the primary consumers of educational programs, they can help identify educational strategies and teacher characteristics that are effective in meeting their needs" (Bacon & Bloom, 1994). A survey of 74 students with behavior disorders ranging in age from 12 to 18 years revealed a number of insights into what students feel is important for teachers to learn. These comments were categorized into the following themes:

PEER COACHING

Peer coaching programs are an effective way for teachers to develop a dialogue and offer one another emotional and technical support. Teachers who have participated in coaching experiences have reported a heightened sense of collegiality, increased experimentation and enthusiasm for learning new skills, and increased communication and cooperation (Williams, 1987). Showers (1985) discusses several purposes of coaching: 1) to build communities of teachers who continuously engage in the study of their craft, 2) to develop shared language and a set of common understandings necessary for the collegial study of new knowledge and skills, and 3) to provide a structure for the follow up to training that is essential for acquiring new teaching skills and strategies.

PERSONAL INVENTORY OF IDEAS FOR FUN

McGee-Cooper (1990) maintains that adults not only have trouble finding time to play, "but when it comes right down to it, they have lost touch with what's fun for them" (p. 76). She suggests that adults reorganize their work/play quotient to allow time to pursue fun activities in their lives "Become as dedicated to planning and experiencing creative, refreshing play as you are disciplined about getting your work done and notice the tremendous boost you will experience in both energy and productivity," she advises (p. 89). Planning "play breaks" for weekend enjoyment will enable you to "experience a new vigor and enthusiasm for your work" (p. 89). The "Personal Inventory of Ideas for Fun" has been reprinted on pages 53 - 54 in Appendix A.

REFUELING YOUR TANK

McGee-Cooper (1990) cite 12 "factors of life" which can improve overall quality while helping you to regain energy and restore balance. These factors are:

- rest
- eating habits
- daily aerobic exercise
- private time
- reading and learning

SENSE OF PURPOSE

A sense of purpose in your life is a key to maintaining energy and motivation (McGee-Cooper, 1990). When you do not feel a sense of purpose, you "can suffer from an overwhelming loss of energy and loss of general enthusiasm for life." On the other hand, a sense of purpose can "renew energy and zest for life." Activities such as starting your own business, writing a book, taking up a new hobby, learning a foreign language, or planning a vacation can help you "invest in a new vision of possibility" that sustains energy counteracts the negative effects of stress (McGee-Cooper).

SHUNNING THE SUPERMAN/ SUPERWOMAN IMAGE

Carballo, Cohen, Danoff, Gale, Meyer, & Orton (1990) advise: "Shun the Superman/Superwoman image--don't expect more of yourself than is realistic. And don't expect yourself to immediately discover successful strategies for teaching *all* of your students--it takes time" (p. 34).

SLEEP

"Activity is essential to life, but so are rest and sleep, as they afford the body the chance to regain its vitality and efficiency in a very positive way" (Humphrey, 1986, p. 73). Sleep allows the body an opportunity to revitalize itself. The amount of sleep you need to feel rested varies with individual needs. The number of hours needed varies according to how soundly you sleep, how hard you may be working, and what other ways you find to rest between periods of sleep . The important factor is to feel adequately rested (McGee-Cooper, 1990).

SOCIAL SUPPORT

"Social support has been identified as the single most effective means of preventing or ameliorating the effects of occupational stress" (Cedoline, 1982, p. 115). Social

fairness/respect, relationship/counseling skills, personal qualities, instructional skills, behavior management, crisis management, and background knowledge.

SELF-PRAISE

Engaging in self-praise statements during the school day for positive outcomes and partial successes can help you feel good about yourself and help you build the fortitude to cope with the stressors of teaching. The tendency to regard yourself as a failure unless you solve all problems is a "sure pathway to burnout" (Farber, 1991, p. 299).

SELF-HYPNOSIS

Hypnosis is an "altered state of consciousness that results from focusing attention on a set of suggestions and allowing oneself to be receptive to those suggestions, thereby allowing free reign to one's power of imagination" (Woolfolk & Richardson, 1978). Self-hypnosis can be used to reduce stress and address the problems underlying it. There are several techniques for inducing self-hypnosis; all of them require practice to be mastered (Greenberg, 1984).

SELF-TALK

Positive attitudes can be successful inoculations against stress by building confidence and self-respect (Cedoline, 1982). If you feel even partially in control of a distressing situation, the negative effects of stress can be reduced. When you feel you have no control, "learned helplessness" offers you no defense against stress. Positive-self talk is an effective way to replace negative thought patterns with more positive ones, keep calm, and build positive attitudes to become an automatic part of your defense against stressful situations.

support involves having frequent interactions that are strongly positive in nature with one or more people who willingly lend you emotional assistance. This support is built upon trust, empathy, and mutual concern. Social support provides an opportunity for you to express your feelings, obtain advice and guidance, give and receive assistance in problem solving, laugh, cry, and share (Cedoline, 1982). Social support can help you perceive stress to be less threatening and allow you to realize you are not alone as others express mutual feelings about similar concerns. Cultivating supportive relationships, both in and out of the workplace, can provide you with a feeling of well-being.

Schools can assist staff members by supporting formal or informal support groups. Sharing concerns provides positive feedback and valuable information about other staff members' reactions to stressful situations (Cedoline, 1982).

TEACHER MINDSETS

Developing healthy thinking strategies can help teachers cope with the everyday stressors of teaching (Webber, Anderson, & Otey, 1991). Perceptions affect behavior; both perceptions and behavior, in turn, influence self-concept, self-confidence, interpersonal relationships, and personal happiness. Healthy teacher mindsets help facilitate success and survival in difficult situations. Twelve positive "survival" mindsets are outlined in "Teacher Mindsets for Surviving in BD Classrooms:"

1) Answer? Answer? I'll Find an Answer
2) There Must be a Point in Here Somewhere
3) Perceptive Sensitivity
4) Progress is Progress--Recognize It!
5) Conflict is a Manageable Challenge
6) "No Strings Attached" Caring
7) Flexible Thinking—I Can Travel New Roads
8) If I'm Not Making Mistakes, Then I'm Not Really Trying
9) Keep Them on the Academic Track--Down Time is Deadly
10) Pain is Not a Fearful Thing
11) Life is Bizarre and Funny
12) Think Straight. Flush Junk Thoughts.

This article has been reprinted on pages 61 - 65 in Appendix A.

TIME ALONE

Although the need for time alone may vary from time to time and some people may require more than others, all of us need time to be alone with our own thoughts (Cooper-McGee, 1990). This time can be part of a morning jogging routine, a solitary hike, a period of time spent reading or listening to music, or it may be a quiet time before or after school to be in the classroom when no one else is present. "Whatever the length and regardless of how the time is spent, it should occur at least once each day. It is the person's special time to reflect, think, rest, cry, laugh, or do whatever is personally needed at the time" (Greenberg, 1984, p. 137).

TIME MANAGEMENT

A number of time management techniques can be used effectively to reduce stress, especially the stress associated with meeting deadlines. These techniques include organizing and budgeting time, prioritizing goals, limiting objectives, establishing realistic schedules, and setting aside at least a few moments for oneself each day (Farber, 1991). Developing a ranked list of tasks "to do" in priority order and crossing off items as they are completed gives you a sense of accomplishment and reduces stress. At the end of the day you feel a clear sense of accomplishment (Cedoline, 1982).

School Strategies

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

School administrative support is recognized as an essential component in alleviation of stress and prevention of burnout among teachers (Calabrese, 1987; Farber, 1991, Gillet, 1987; Reed, 1979; Schlansker, 1987). These authors make a number of suggestions administrators can do to support staff members, thereby reducing stress:

- Involve teachers in decision making
- Become more visible around the school
- Increase oral and written communication to teachers
- Provide recognition for good effort and support for ideas that are currently working
- Encourage faculty to try new ideas
- Provide clear guidelines for policy, especially regarding discipline
- Follow up on requests with action, feedback, and more action
- Protect teachers from impossible demands
- Develop teacher assistance teams
- Encourage additional in-service courses
- Offer teachers changes in their routines (e.g. team teaching, rotation of subjects or grade taught)
- Encourage the development of in-house resource centers
- Make school athletic facilities available to teachers before or after school

BEHAVIORAL CONSULTATION

Behavior management consultation can provide teachers with assistance in behavior management issues. The role of the consultant is to "1) facilitate a mutual understanding and agreement regarding a definition of the problem or goal; and 2) provide information and ideas regarding options in effective approaches to solving problems or reaching goals" (Oregon, 1989).

A profile of the Behavior Management Consultation Program offered through the Linn-Benton Education Service District located in Albany, OR has been reprinted on page 69 of Appendix B.

DISTRICTWIDE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TEAMS

Technical assistance teams work districtwide to provide ongoing assistance to teachers who work with students with emotional/behavioral disorders and their families (McEvoy, M. A., Davis, C. A., Reichie, J., 1993). Teams are composed of several professionals across a number of disciplines, including psychologists, occupational therapists, speech therapists, speech and language pathologists, and early childhood specialists. Those professionals chosen to serve on the team are released from their responsibilities for several hours weekly in order to provide districtwide consultation. Team members receive training in effective communication, use of appropriate assessment strategies and intervention development, and ongoing evaluation.

General technical assistance for effective strategies to manage challenging behavior on a classroom-wide basis may be requested of the team. Team members then provide general assessment and behavior management strategies in consultation with one or more teachers, or referrals may be child specific and come from the student's IEP/IFSP team. With this type of individual referral, a member of the technical assistance team may become a case manager who collects information and presents the referral problem to the other team members so that together they can develop a proactive intervention strategy (McEvoy, M. A., Davis, C. A., Reichie, J., 1993).

EMBEDDED INSERVICE TRAINING

Embedded Inservice Training seeks to make training an ongoing part of the school environment in order to build the capacity of local service delivery systems (Albin, 1993). This method uses a trainer-of-trainers approach but makes an effort to individualize the training that is offered in any one setting. Features of the model include:

- Tailored to individual training settings;
- Creates capacity to train others;
- Efficient delivery of training;
- Utilizes multiple training methods;
- Delivered on-site;
- Delivered to all personnel;
- Distributed training sessions;
- Competency-based; and
- Utilizes inductive and deductive instruction.

Embedded Inservice Training "provides a vehicle for continuous quality improvement in school, community programs, and other service delivery settings by offering a training system that a) is locally controlled; b) is responsive to local needs, systems, and philosophies; c) is efficient and to a large extent learner-guided; d) provides training on-site, distributed across time, using multiple teaching methods; and e) creates the internal capacity to maintain and extend training" (Albin, 1993, p. 11).

INSERVICE TRAINING

The continual updating of skills and knowledge in the field of education is necessary for teachers to feel competent and prepared to teach in a rapidly changing world. This updating should be carefully planned, ordered, monitored, and maintained (Cedoline, 1982). School districts bear the primary responsibility for providing the resources and training necessary to prepare staff members to implement new programs and improve teaching skills. As the incidence of violent, aggressive behaviors in school settings continues to grow, it is important that teachers be given continual training in behavioral management strategies and updates on social trends affecting school systems as well as community services (Worbel, 1993).

MENTORING

Matching newly hired teachers with experienced ones for support and guidance as they begin their first year of teaching can be an effective prevention for burnout. Without help, many first-year teachers feel defeated and leave the field after only one year of teaching. Having a mentor means that each new teacher can turn to a more experienced professional who can observe, demonstrate, give feedback, listen, and offer assistance and advice.

One of the most successful mentoring programs is the Tarleton Model for Accelerated Teacher Education (TMATE), based at Tarleton State University in Stephenville, TX (Littleton, Tally-Foos, & Wolaver, 1992). The TMATE director assists the school district with mentor selection. The mentor must be an experienced teacher, must teach in the same building as the beginning teacher, must teach the same subject at the same level, and must be committed to improving instruction. Teachers selected as mentors receive 12 hours of training at Tarleton State University. Upon completion of the training, the mentor spends the school year working with the beginning teacher. Responsibilities include visiting the beginning

teacher's class monthly, having the beginning teacher observe the mentor's class at least once monthly, meeting the beginning teacher informally every day during the first six weeks of the school year, and helping the beginning teacher develop a plan for professional growth at the beginning of each school semester. The school district provides release time for the mentor and beginning teacher during the induction year. Mentors receive a stipend for $150 a semester.

ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Organizational development, when applied to school organization, is a participatory process for improving working relationships, programs, student learning, and climate (Martin, Roark, & Tonso, 1978). In order to promote effectiveness within all levels of the organization, productivity and personal satisfaction are maximized through individual and organizational change and mutual growth (Cedoline, 1982). This improved quality of work life is achieved through focusing on these specific areas:

- Development of clear and open communication at all levels within the organization;
- Establishment of mutual trust through increased understanding and better communication;
- Determination that human relations development and systematic goal setting are major goals of all organizations;
- Involvement of more individuals in decision making and encouragement of information and nonjudgmental identification of problems;
- Creation of an open problem-solving climate of mutual cooperation and collaboration;
- Development of group effectiveness through group tasks;
- Establishment of procedures that allow conflict to emerge and comfortably encourage resolution; and
- Commitment to total system effort. (Cedoline, 1982)

Organizational development addresses issues such as leadership, decision making, problem solving, conflict management, communication, and planning. "A main function is to provide team building which builds interpersonal relationships by improved cooperation, communication, and conflict management" (Cedoline, 1982, p. 193).

RESTRUCTURING AND REFORM

The ongoing, nationwide reconceptualization of our schools can help prevent teacher stress and burnout if it considers the needs of teachers to be as important as the needs of students. "An effective and enduring solution to teacher burnout probably requires such second-order change strategies" (Farber, 1991, p. 308). There are numerous possibilities and combinations of ways that schools could be restructured to meet the needs of teachers as well as students. Farber discusses three examples: 1) schools can provide opportunities for teachers to work with students in more intensive, individual ways, thereby increasing the likelihood that they will experience more of the intrinsic rewards of teaching; 2) schools can provide opportunities for teachers to exercise true autonomy within the school system by serving in decision-making roles; and 3) schools can be "organized around the principles of a psychological sense of community" (p. 308).

Wangberg (1987) maintains that schools must learn the same lesson that American industry has learned—participative decision making improves attendance, morale, and production. Reforms that would improve the conditions of teaching as a profession and increase job satisfaction include :

Reduce Burnout

- Improve the image of the teacher.
- Develop recommendations for reform with input from teachers.
- Emphasize the educational (rather than the custodial) function of our schools.
- Increase administrative support of teachers.
- Increase the possibility for teachers to interact positively with students and with each other.

Increase Involvement

- Recognize teachers as curricular and instructional experts.
- Increase teachers' decision-making authority at all levels and in all areas that affect them.
- Emphasize building-level and classroom-level decision making wherever possible.
- Encourage innovative, creative, higher-level teaching.

Offer Work Rewards

- Design and implement programs to increase parent and community support and involvement in the schools.
- Design and implement programs to give teachers individual recognition, both tangible and intangible.

- Design and implement opportunities for job mobility and promotion within the teaching profession.

Curtail Work Overload

- Examine ways to reduce and consolidate paperwork.
- Provide computers and/or aids to assist teachers with necessary paperwork.
- Keep class size manageable.
- Provide adequate planning time for teachers.
- Use aids or volunteers to release teachers from non-teaching duties.

Improve Physical Environment

- Improve the appearance of school buildings.
- Furnish school buildings with appropriate, comfortable furniture.
- Repair run-down school buildings.
- Air-condition schools in regions where this is necessary.
- Keep building temperatures at reasonable settings.
- Reduce noise levels where these are unreasonable.
- Provide adequate instructional materials.
- Provide adequate programs for security.

Improve Classroom Management

- Provide teachers with effective classroom management inservice.
- Emphasize classroom management in teacher education programs.
- Involve parents in classroom management.
- Provide teachers with seminars on self-concept building for themselves and for their students (Wangberg, 1987, pp. 79 - 80).

STATEWIDE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NETWORK

The state of Utah has developed a Statewide Technical Assistance Network (STAN) which uses electronically-mediated distance education technology to link teachers throughout the state in a supportive network (Blair, West, Young, & Johnson, 1994). During two-hour sessions every other week 150 teachers gather in school and district sites to listen, talk, share ideas, and offer solutions to problems via full-motion video and audio technology. STAN participants earn university college credit for sharing their problems and offering solutions to students' challenging behaviors. A description of the network has been reprinted on page 73 of Appendix B.

SUPPORT NETWORKS

The state of Maine initiated a statewide network in 1986 to provide support and training for special educators throughout the state. According to literature provided by the project, The Maine Support Network for Rural Special Educators was founded on the assumption that "teachers need support as well as challenge in their jobs, that collegiality is a necessary condition for professional growth, that teachers can play a powerful role in helping one another, and that structures need to be developed to allow and encourage such continued growth." The network offers opportunities for professional support, a forum for mutual problem solving, validation of feelings, sharing of resources, and training opportunities. Regionally-based activities are held in locations that are accessible to teachers throughout the state. Fall and spring support meetings are held in six regions of the state. A statewide winter retreat is held each February, and a Summer Teachers' Academy is held in August of each year. Specific content of these meetings is determined by current needs. The Network recently opened membership to regular education as well as special education teachers. A description of the project has been reprinted on pages 77 - 78 of Appendix B.

TEACHER ASSISTANCE TEAMS

Teacher Assistance Teams (TAT) operate within schools to provide day-to-day peer problem-solving assistance to teachers. The model consists of three elected teachers who meet weekly to assist other teachers within a school. The goal of the team is to "obtain more efficient and effective delivery of special help to children by placing the initiative for action in the hands of classroom teachers (Chalfant, Pysh, & Moultrie, 1979).

TAT is based upon four assumptions (Chalfant, Pysh, & Moultrie, 1979):

- General classroom teachers have the skills and knowledge to help many students with learning and behavior problems;
- Teachers can solve more problems by working together than by working alone;
- General education should make every effort to resolve problems at the building level before referring a child to special education; and
- Teachers learn best by doing. The best way to increase their skills is by helping them to solve immediate problems in their classroom.

The *Prospectus Teacher Assistance Teams: A Support System for Classroom Teachers* (Chalfant & Pysh, 1988) reprinted on pages 81 - 101 of Appendix B offers a detailed description of the TAT model.

TEACHER CENTERS

Teacher centers provide teachers with a place where they can meet to discuss common problems, pool resources, acquire new skills, and provide peer support (Farber, 1991). Teacher centers may be located within individual schools or serve an entire district. Fibkins (1983) suggests that all staff members be encouraged to participate in the teacher center, including administrators, secretaries, and custodians. Development of a teacher center program takes time and effort. Although the nature of teacher centers may differ from district to district, they are generally "creative, stimulating places where a rich exchange of material and ideas can occur" (Lieberman & Miller, 1979, p. 189).

TEACHERS HELPING TEACHERS

Teachers Helping Teachers (Acquanni, 1994) is a thirty-minute problem-solving system that encourages teachers to identify and clarify problems through a structured sequence of steps and then, as a team, brainstorm solutions that can be developed into an action plan. Developed by members of School District 12 in Woodstock, New Brunswick and the Roeher Institute as a way for teachers to support their colleagues, the system includes a videotape and guidebook. *Teachers Helping Teachers* is available from The Roeher Institute, Kinsmen Building, York University, 4700 Keele Street, North York, Ontario M3J1P3; (416) 661-9611 for $75.

TEACHER WORK GROUPS

Teacher work groups are groups of teachers, organized informally or as part of the school organization, "to work toward better educational outcomes for all students" (Ferguson, in press). "Work groups can be of any size and composition, but they have only one mission: The group must be committed to solving the problems that

seem to be impeding members' efforts to improve learning." Teacher work groups may be formed within schools or among schools in rural areas. Although the composition and activities of these work groups may vary, they all have in common these three features:

- Teacher work groups are teacher directed;
- Teacher work groups are outcome based; and
- Teacher work groups focus on continuing evaluation and improvement.

Teacher work groups "run themselves" as long as members find the experience to be valuable. Among the "tricks" that can keep groups functioning effectively are: 1) Attitudes must remain positive and the creative energy of the group must be marshaled around the fundamental belief that all problems can be solved; 2) All members must spend time listening in order to understand each others' points of view so that each teacher "feels not only listened to, but heard; not just responded to, but helped; not just respected, but valued;" and 3) The group needs to "keep the point in focus."

TIME RESTRUCTURING

Time is a finite resource; its use must be planned and allocated wisely to benefit both students and teachers. "Time is the basic dimension through which teachers' work is constructed and interpreted. Time often defines the possibilities and limitations of teachers' professional performance" (Time strategies, 1994, p. 10). Various strategies used by school systems across the country to allow teachers more time for activities other than teaching include:

Freed-Up Time: Using various arrangements to free teachers from direct student supervision. These include enlisting administrators to teach classes, authorizing teaching assistants and college interns to teach classes at regular intervals under the direction of a teacher, and teaming teachers in a way that allows one teacher to instruct for another.

Restructured Time: Formally altering the time frame of the traditional calendar, school day, or teaching schedule.

Common Time: Using common planning time to support restructuring programs, interdisciplinary teams, subject-area-collaboration, and grade-level planning.

Better-Used Time: Using currently scheduled meetings and professional development activities more effectively by focusing on planning and collaboration.

Purchased Time: Hiring additional teachers, clerks, parents, and support staff to allow for smaller class sizes and/or expanded or additional planning sessions. (Time strategies, 1994, p. 17)

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Appendix A
Individual Strategies

Rockwell, S. (1993). Personal notes. In S. Rockwell, *Tough to reach: Tough to teach.*. (pp. 57 - 60). Reston, VA: Council for Exceptional Children.

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8

Personal Notes

From behind the gimmicks and techniques involved in the survival of a day, week, year, or longer with children with behavioral disorders, a real person emerges. The children learn to trust the professional aspects of a teacher's relationship with them. However, children are never content to stop there, as adults might be. Children watch, wait, listen, pry, probe, and poke until they're satisfied that they know all that they want and need to know. The personality they discover behind the point sheets, reward system, and time-out chair makes all the difference as far as they're concerned.

My enthusiasm for teaching and learning is real. My belief in the children is real. My desire to be honest, fair, firm, and caring is real. In these ways, I believe most teachers are alike. I have a visual image of myself as a velvet-padded brick. The children's willful, misdirected energy can safely find release and new direction as they figuratively and sometimes literally bang their heads against me. I am not unforgivingly angered, disappointed, or hurt. No matter how rough the previous day was, I can meet a new day with positive expectations. My students know that I hate fights and angry confrontations. They also know I won't back down or be intimidated.

Not everyone is a velvet-padded brick. Not everyone needs to be. A teacher's style emerges from a creative blending of learned technique and individual personality. It is important for each teacher to be aware of his or her own personal style. In spite of all we know about behavior management, the real growth occurs through relationships.

As I watch my students go through the ups and downs of learning newer, more appropriate responses to their feelings, I am often amazed at little things adults can easily take for granted. Why does a child who has been interrupting a lesson for 10 solid minutes, ignoring corrections, and cursing a blue streak over the zeros on his point sheet respond quickly, quietly, and without further discussion to "Put your head on your desk—now"?

Then there is the 6-foot tall 15 year old who could break me into kindling if he wanted to. Why does he go to the chair in the corner when I tell him to go after he has just called me a four-eyed, fucking whore?

I'm not complaining, but sometimes the craziest things students do are the most compliant. It's part of a mystery I'm still trying to solve. The following tips are designed to maximize personal effectiveness and minimize stress. Burnout *can* be avoided.

1. Know your style, your strengths, and your limits.
2. Use your style and strengths at every possible point.

3. Respect your limits just as carefully as you respect the limits of your students. Asking for help when you need it is not just OK; it's the only sane, intelligent, and professional thing to do.

4. On rotten days, it's OK to tell the students that you feel angry, disappointed, or tired. Sometimes I am able to get through a tough day by saying, "I really hate it when our day goes like this. I feel like having a screaming fit too." The students will smile devilishly and hope with all their might that I lose it. I then find it helpful to talk myself through the decision-making steps out loud. This helps diffuse my anger while setting an appropriate example for the children.

5. At some point, there will be a child who really annoys you or is repulsive to you in some way. Admit it to yourself. Discuss it confidentially with a co-worker. Be aware of it as you deal with the student. Being honest with yourself is the only way to get beyond it. Not liking every child is not a sign of failure. Making a conscious effort to be positive with the child in spite of your feelings can work. It's OK to have personal feelings. It's important to maintain professional behavior.

6. Have at least two fun activities always available for spur-of-the-moment rewards. Bingo for small prizes, craft activities, and simple cooking activities are common favorites.

7. Plan at least one thing every day that you enjoy doing with the class. I personally hate reading-group activities. Science experiments, singing with the guitar, and building structures related to social studies are my favorite activities. I can motivate myself and my students to get through less enjoyable lessons by planning something more fun for later.

8. Have highly structured, independent work always available for times when things get wild. Word searches, crossword puzzles, and fill-in-the-blank worksheets are possibilities. One thing that works well with older students is to offer them the choice of covering material orally in an appropriate way or having them copy a large amount of information from the chalkboard or a book. The message to them is, "We are going to cover this information today. You may benefit from a discussion of it or, you may copy it. Either way, I will know you have been introduced to the concepts. You decide with your behavior how you will learn it."

9. Take weekends and holidays off. The paper work will be there waiting for you when you get back. Mental health breaks must be respected.

10. Have as much love and support in your life as possible. You can't give if you're not getting.

11. Make a list of all the things that need to be done. Organize them by day, week, grading period, and semester. Give the aide or associate the jobs that don't absolutely have to be done by the teacher. Filing, grading papers, recording grades, averaging grades, filling out forms, running off papers, and caring for bulletin boards are just a few of the time-consuming clerical chores that can be shared with others.

12. Give the aide or associate a list of expected responsibilities and do's and don'ts in the beginning. The Appendix gives some excerpts from my own files. Getting off to a good start by being positive and precise with the aide has many advantages. Be aware of how much training and experience the aide has. Some school systems employ well-educated associates, some do their own training, and others require very little education and training.

13. Set up a filing system immediately. It is easy to get lost in all the paper shuffling. School systems are funded to an extent based on the accuracy of their paperwork. Folder headings can fall under two main categories: Professional and Instructional.

Professional Folders

These can be organized in the following way:

P1. Professional Documents:
Certificates
Diplomas
Evaluations

P2. Special Education Memos

P3. Regular Education Memos

P4. Testing Forms and Information

P5. Report Cards

P6. Anecdotal Records

P7. Behavior Charts and Graphs

P8. Motivational Charts and Graphs

P9. Lesson Plans

P10. Substitute Folder

P11. Associate Folder

P12. Classroom Management File

P13. Forms:
Blank IEP Forms
Permission Slips
Etc.

P14. Acronym Lists for County, State, and Federal Programs

P15. Community Resource List for Parents

Instructional Folders

Have a folder for each month of the year. Attach a blank calendar to the front of each folder with the name of the month printed on it. Make notes on the calendar for quick reference to special holidays and activity sheets you may find related to each month. Stick copies of all monthly activities in these folders. Art, math, spelling, science, and social studies can be included in these special activity folders. Building a reservoir of "filler" activities can save your life on hectic days. These activities are often useful to have in the substitute folder. The substitute can keep students busy on current activities without disrupting plans you have made. Make sure the substitute folder is updated each month. Christmas worksheets won't go over well in May. Label these special monthly activity folders I1 through I12.

Instructional folders I13 through I23 could be labeled as follows:

I13. Addition Worksheets

I14. Subtraction Worksheets

I15. Multiplication Worksheets

I16. Division Worksheets

I17. Spelling

I18. Language

I19. Primary Reading

I20. Upper Elementary Reading

I21. Secondary Reading

I22. Teacher-Selected Science Topics

I23. Teacher-Selected Social Study Topics

14. Plan bulletin boards with seasons in mind. The background paper takes a long time to replace and is expensive. September through November background paper can be brown, yellow, or orange. December through February background can be red, dark blue, or white. March through June background can be pink, light green, or light blue. During the summer months, primary colors work well. Each month, borders and actual decorations can be changed in a minimum of time. Change background paper a minimum of every 3 months.

15. Make large monthly or seasonal envelopes out of poster board. Print headings on each, and file bulletin board materials in them. Use a large, heavy-duty garbage bag or sew a cloth bag to hold all the envelopes for easy storage.

16. Keep an "Idea Journal." Get a notebook with tabs. Divide the journal into subject headings. Every time a television show, magazine, friend, or co-worker sparks an idea, write it down under the appropriate heading. Multilevel classrooms require creative utilization of time, energy, and material resources. An idea journal can help tremendously.

17. Have some kind of personal and professional support group.

18. Plan something positive for yourself each day. Take at least 30 minutes to do something enjoyable for yourself. Knowing that a reward is waiting after the paperwork is done also helps.

19. Take time regularly to assess progress and set new goals. Part of the job of avoiding burnout is feeling successful. Savor your successes to recharge your batteries. Then set new goals to feel successful again. Falling into a rut can be the worst kind of stress.

The Appendix includes sample worksheets, progress charts, intervention strategies, and other information intended to make life in the classroom easier to organize and manage.

McGee-Cooper, A. (1990). Characteristics of childhood. In A. McGee-Cooper, *You don't have to go home from work exhausted!* (p. 35). Dallas: Bowen and Rogers.

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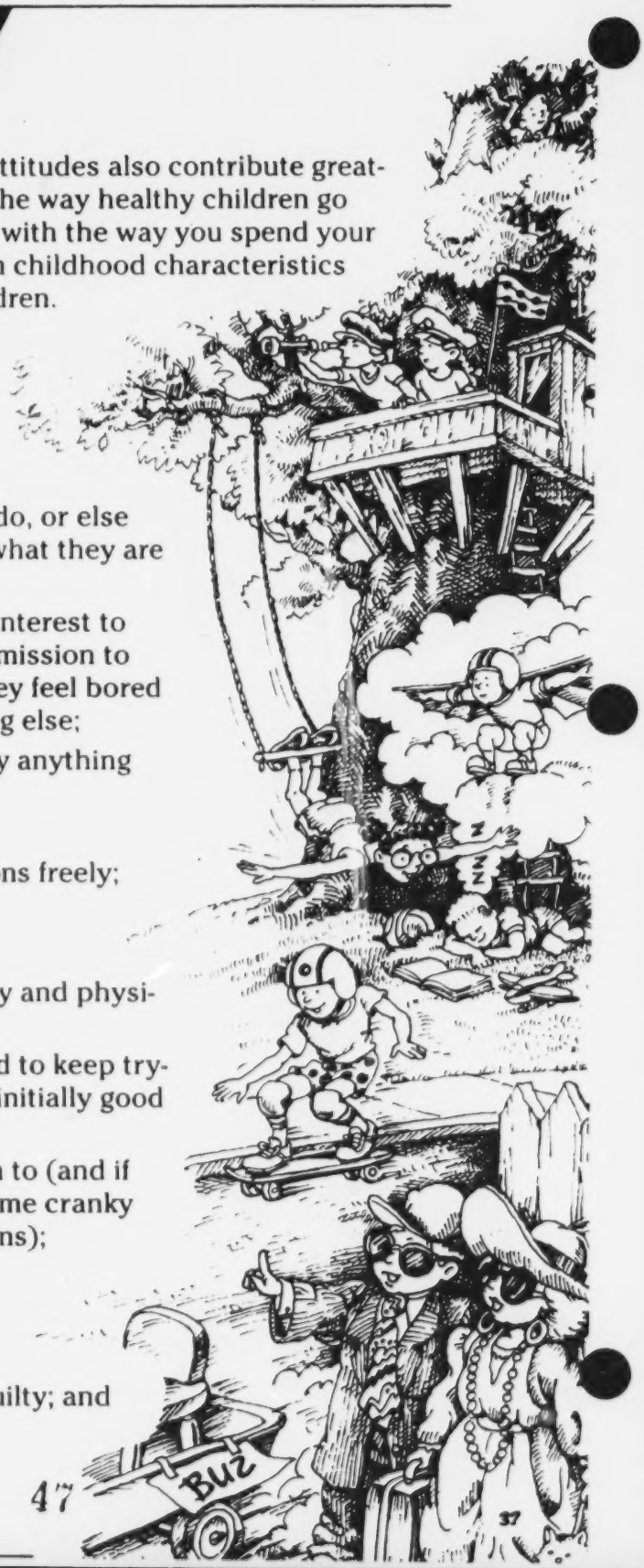
Childhood behavior patterns and attitudes also contribute greatly to their energy levels. Consider the way healthy children go about their day, then compare this with the way you spend your average day. Study the list of fifteen childhood characteristics that we have observed among children.

Characteristics of Childhood

Little kids characteristically

1. seek out things that are fun to do, or else they find a way to have fun at what they are doing;
2. spontaneously jump from one interest to another, giving themselves permission to leave one activity whenever they feel bored or more interested in something else;
3. are curious, usually eager to try anything once;
4. smile and laugh a lot;
5. experience and express emotions freely;
6. are creative and innovative;
7. are physically active;
8. are constantly growing mentally and physically;
9. will risk often—i.e., aren't afraid to keep trying something that they aren't initially good at and aren't afraid to fail;
10. rest when their body tells them to (and if they resist nap time, they become cranky and have shorter attention spans);
11. learn enthusiastically;
12. dream and imagine;
13. believe in the impossible;
14. generally don't worry or feel guilty; and
15. are passionate.



McGee-Cooper, A. (1990). Action item. In A. McGee-Cooper, *You don't have to go home from work exhausted!* (p. 39). Dallas: Bowen and Rogers.

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ACTION ITEM

Study the following components of play and consider how they help to release energy. When preschool children are playing, they are usually

- looking at and touching toys and equipment that have stimulating colors, shapes, and textures (notice how few black-and-white and single-colored toys there are);
- being challenged to solve something, such as putting together a puzzle and making the jack-in-the-box pop up;
- fantasizing about being something other than themselves, such as being a lion or a firefighter or their mommy;
- getting exercise, and therefore increasing their metabolism, by climbing on a jungle gym, playing tag, jumping rope, etc.;
- testing the limits, as in how far out on a tree limb they can climb or how much they can get away with before being punished;
- exploring and discovering relationships, such as cause and effect (what happens when I step on a bug, drop an egg, etc.?);
- discovering their personal power, such as swinging high in the air or winning a game; and
- creating new possibilities, such as blending two colors together to make a new color.

These activities renew energy—for both children and adults—by

- relieving stress buildup;
- creating an interplay and balance between the right and left brain hemispheres;
- releasing energizing hormones and endorphins;
- producing challenging situations and the satisfaction of solving them; and
- building bridges between people.

McGee-Cooper, A. (1990). Action item. In A. McGee-Cooper, *You don't have to go home from work exhausted!* (p. 58). Dallas: Bowen and Rogers.

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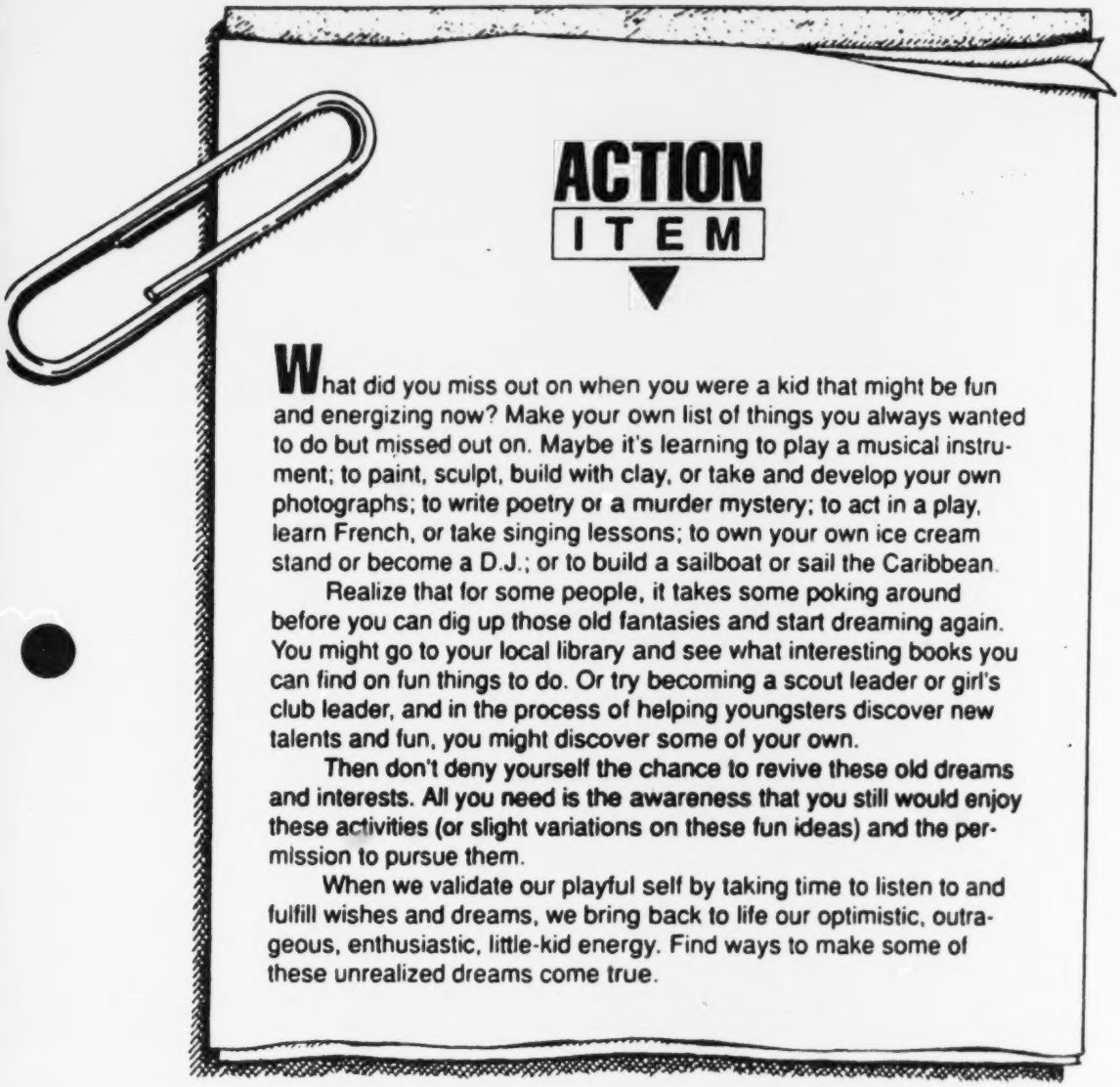

ACTION ITEM

What did you miss out on when you were a kid that might be fun and energizing now? Make your own list of things you always wanted to do but missed out on. Maybe it's learning to play a musical instrument; to paint, sculpt, build with clay, or take and develop your own photographs; to write poetry or a murder mystery; to act in a play, learn French, or take singing lessons; to own your own ice cream stand or become a D.J.; or to build a sailboat or sail the Caribbean.

Realize that for some people, it takes some poking around before you can dig up those old fantasies and start dreaming again. You might go to your local library and see what interesting books you can find on fun things to do. Or try becoming a scout leader or girl's club leader, and in the process of helping youngsters discover new talents and fun, you might discover some of your own.

Then don't deny yourself the chance to revive these old dreams and interests. All you need is the awareness that you still would enjoy these activities (or slight variations on these fun ideas) and the permission to pursue them.

When we validate our playful self by taking time to listen to and fulfill wishes and dreams, we bring back to life our optimistic, outrageous, enthusiastic, little-kid energy. Find ways to make some of these unrealized dreams come true.

McGee-Cooper, A. (1990). Action item. In A. McGee-Cooper, *You don't have to go home from work exhausted!* (pp. 78 - 79). Dallas: Bowen and Rogers.

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Imaging on Your Way Home from Work

As you travel home from work (or if your office is at home, choose a time toward the end of your work day), spend a few minutes recalling only the positives of your day. Think of the goals you accomplished as well as the healthy habits you practiced, the nice conversation you had with a friend, the compliments you received on a recent project, the new idea you came up with, and so forth.

At first it may be difficult for you to congratulate yourself on the good aspects of the day rather than worrying about problems or disappointments that surfaced. If so, this will show you how unaccustomed you are to revisiting your wins. Yet imaging the positives is a highly effective habit of peak performers. Think of it as a mental dress rehearsal for future performances. Also, remember that your subconscious mind cannot tell the difference between a real experience and a remembered one. So to recall a win is like reliving it again. And if your mind insists on thinking about what you did wrong or badly, replay that experience, doing it correctly this time.

McGee-Cooper, A. (1990). Action item. In A. McGee-Cooper, *You don't have to go home from work exhausted!* (p. 232). Dallas: Bowen and Rogers.

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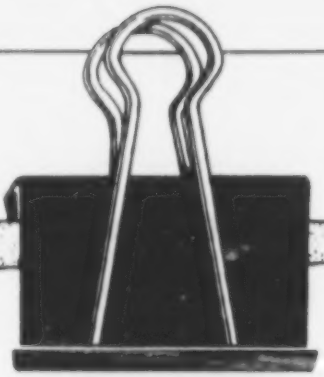

ACTION ITEM

Jot down things that are fun for you. Put them into columns according to the amount of time they take.

As you begin recalling what's fun for you, write down as many possibilities as you can. For example, you might think, "It's fun to read a novel." How long do you typically need to enjoy this fun? "Well, I'd like to have at least an hour to get into it," you might answer. So you would enter this idea for fun in the third column, "30 Minutes to 1/2 Day." An idea for fun might fit in all four columns, such as spending time with a special friend. If so, just put an arrow across to indicate all the columns it will fit in. You might want to time how long it takes before you begin to run out of ideas. Draw a line when you find the ideas are no longer coming quickly and you have to stop and think awhile between ideas.

Take time for this list-making activity. If you like, invite a friend or mate to be making a similar fun list while you make yours.

How many activities did you come up with? You might be interested to know that most busy adults run out of ideas between ten and fifteen. (Ten-year-olds have easily generated fifty-five ideas in the same amount of time.) And how many could you think of quickly before having to really search for ideas?

Now, just for fun, count up how many ideas you have in the first two columns (ways to have fun in thirty minutes or less) and how many ideas you have in the last two columns. Which has the larger number? And what does this tell you about the problems you are having finding time for fun?

Personal Inventory of Ideas for Fun

2–5 Minutes	5–30 Minutes	30 Minutes to 1/2 Day	1/2 Day or More

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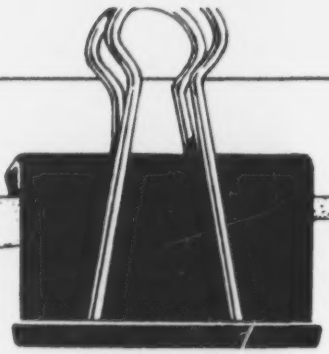

ACTION ITEM

The Cure: Refueling Your Tank

What percentage of the time do you get an adequate amount of each of these?

	0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100%
1. Proper rest											
2. Good nutrition											
3. Daily "non-stressed" exercise											
4. Time alone											
5. Time to read and learn											
6. Spiritual growth											
7. Intimacy and love											
8. Fun, joy, and play											
9. Quality time with family and friends											
10. New interests or hobbies											
11. Regular and frequent vacations											
12. Sense of purpose											

Choose one area that is low and creatively brainstorm some ways to increase the time devoted to this area by 10% over the next month. The purpose in setting a modest goal is to be sure it is attainable. Set yourself up to win. Let both your intuition and your logic tell you which is most important to improve. Frequently, a small improvement in one critical area can make a big difference toward moving you back to whole-brained balance.

Webber, J., Anderson, T., & Otey, L. (1991). Teacher mindsets for surviving in BD classrooms. *Intervention in School and Clinic*, 26 (5), 288 - 292.

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Teacher Mindsets for Surviving in BD Classrooms

Presents 12 mindsets that could make life with BD students easier and less stressful for teachers

By Jo Webber, Tom Anderson, and Laura Otey

Teaching students with behavior disorders is difficult. The students may be aggressive, extremely withdrawn, anxious, bizarre, and most are noncompliant. Easy cures have not been found, and the search for effective programming for these "super-problems" continues. It is the opinion of many professionals that "effective and humane education of disturbed children has always depended on the individual actions of competent, caring teachers, and this will be the case in the future" (Kauffman, 1989, p. 408). Teacher characteristics greatly impact student success (Dembo, 1988)—particularly those teacher characteristics that have to do with responsiveness, warmth, supportiveness, acceptance, positive interactions, affection, flexibility, hope, confidence, joy, and honesty.

Psychological soundness and appropriate interpersonal interactions are necessary characteristics for teachers who want to effectively instruct students with behavior disorders (Kauffman, 1989). But how do teachers become psychologically sound? Cognitive theory (Beck, 1976; Ellis & Harper, 1975) holds that psychological soundness comes from adopting a rational

belief system and developing healthy thinking strategies. Perceptions affect behavior, and both perceptions and behavior influence self-concept, self-confidence, interpersonal relationships, and personal happiness (Bard, 1980). Healthy teacher mindsets, then, might facilitate success and survival in a very difficult job.

This article contains 12 mindsets that could make life with BD students easier and less stressful for teachers. As a whole, the mindsets constitute a philosophy regarding students with behavior disorders that forms a basis for humane and cogent treatment.

Mindsets for Survival

1. Answer? Answer? Yes, I'll Find An Answer.

It is important for teachers working in BD classrooms to believe that all problems have solutions and that one problem may have many solutions. Students with emotional and behavioral disorders present a teacher with difficult problems needing creative solutions. Teachers who are competent at finding these solutions are able to (a) step back and think about the problem, (b) request help from outside resources when necessary, (c) apply various problem-solving strategies, and (d) *persist* in searching for answers.

This "back-to-the-drawing-board" type of thinking will reduce the pressure to be perfect and "get it right the first time," while allowing teachers to feel empowered rather than victimized and helpless (Abramson, Seligman, & Teasdale, 1978). Panic is rare for teachers with solutions. Teachers who believe that there is an answer usually make creative, organized, well-thought-out decisions. Above all, they rarely, if ever, give up on students.

2. There Must Be a Pony in Here Somewhere.

This mindset is based on the joke about the child who was excessively optimistic and whose mother tried to remedy that by sticking him in a room full of horse manure, only to find him later whistling and digging in the horse manure. When asked what he was doing, he replied, "With all this horse manure, there must be a pony in here somewhere." Looking on the bright side and being hopeful instead of dwelling on the negative and having little hope has been found to result in better health, more energy, fewer fears, more trust, and more self-confidence (Peterson, Seligman, & Vaillant, 1988).

Optimistic people tend to feel happy, relaxed, joyful, and empowered in their everyday lives. Seldom do regrets surface, and if they do, they do not linger. Optimism is different from minimizing. People who do not see tragedy, suffering, and pain are probably not seeing what is real (Emery & Campbell, 1986). Optimists recognize undesirable events but do not obsessively focus on these things. Furthermore, they generally feel that things will work out and that their effort can make a positive impact. An optimistic teacher would see his or her students as children who are essentially good and have positive attributes to be nurtured. This teacher would rarely feel helpless. Being hopeful, it seems, is essential to survival with difficult students.

Survival Mindsets

1. Answer? Answer? Yes, I'll Find an Answer.
2. There Must Be a Pony in Here Somewhere.
3. Perceptive Sensitivity.
4. Progress Is Progress—Recognize It!
5. Conflict Is a Manageable Challenge.
6. "No Strings Attached" Caring.
7. Flexible Thinking—I Can Travel New Roads.
8. If I'm Not Making Mistakes, Then I'm Not Really Trying.
9. Keep Them on the Academic Track—Down Time Is Deadly.
10. Pain Is Not a Fearful Thing.
11. Life Is Bizarre and Funny.
12. Think Straight. Flush Junk Thoughts.

3. Perceptive Sensitivity.

How a teacher views a student—his or her perception of the student—can impact teaching outcomes (Good & Brophy, 1984). It is important to view the student with sensitivity in order to understand the function of his or her behavior (Kauffman, 1989). Perceptive sensitivity includes the following beliefs:

1. *The student is a child worth saving.* This child is worthy of my best instructional techniques and I will not quit trying to teach him or her.
2. *Disruptive behavior reflects the student's past learning history; thus new behavior must be taught.* The child was not born "bad." The student has been taught to be aggressive, oppositional, and bizarre by receiving reinforcers for those behaviors. This means that other, appropriate behavior can be learned.
3. *The student's behavior might possibly be healthy, given abnormal circumstances.* His or her reaction may be reasonable given his or her environment. It is probably normal to react to pain by lashing out at the world or mistrusting everyone.
4. *The student's behavior is a way to satisfy his or her needs.* Satisfying one's needs underlies basic human motivation (Maslow, 1954). Needing to feel safe and secure, connected to other humans, worthy, and wanting to become fulfilled are basic to personality development. The student is probably doing his or her best to meet those needs.
5. *I need to view the world through the student's eyes.* Empathizing with the student gives perspective about what it would be like to be that age, have those characteristics, and live in that environment. The ability to understand the student's thoughts, desires, and needs while overlooking what he or she says is crucial for effective communication. The student's words often get in the way.

A teacher who is sensitive and perceptive understands aggression to possibly mean, "I'm scared," or "I'm sad," and will respond accordingly. So the student's needs (rather than the teacher's anger and embarrassment) would govern teacher actions. The sensitive teacher tries to formulate accurate per-

ceptions in order to better understand and teach each student.

4. Progress Is Progress—Recognize It!

We are all products of a goal-oriented society. To be successful, it is necessary to set a goal and work to accomplish it. Falling short of that goal causes feelings of frustration and failure. The mindset that will enhance survival in BD classrooms is one that says, "The next step toward the goal *IS* the goal." Often, teachers have neither the resources nor the time to accomplish their final goal with students, but every step toward that goal is a victory. The task is to set up a system (i.e., observational techniques such as frequency counts and rating scales) so that it is possible to recognize each step as progress. Two steps forward and one step back is occasion for celebration.

Teachers who recognize progress in small changes tend to feel reinforced more often and reinforce their students more often. This feeling of effectiveness can prevent stress and burnout. Survival with BD students may hinge on this ability to see indistinct progress.

5. Conflict Is a Manageable Challenge.

In our schools today, teaching without conflict is impossible. Developing certain beliefs about conflict can, however, make it a manageable challenge. Viewing conflict as a learning process prevents it from becoming something to avoid. Some types of conflict can actually stimulate interest and creativity in people (Hart, 1981). Conflict with BD students may even be an indication that a teacher is "getting close" to reaching the student in a positive way (Tyler, 1969).

Managing anger is a basic component of successfully resolving conflict. Recognizing anger and potential conflict will allow a teacher to avoid or stop power struggles instead of being drawn into a conflict unwittingly. However, there are times when conflict is necessary, and the ability to recognize these times becomes significant. Believing conflict is manageable and accepting it as a growth experience is probably one of the most valuable mindsets that a BD teacher can develop.

6. "No Strings Attached" Caring.

There is a corollary to the Golden Rule (Do unto others as you would have them do unto you) that is a common mindset. The corollary is: "If I do extra for you, you should do something for me." Teachers who expect students to return their caring are often disappointed. Students with BD are usually incapable of returning affection.

"Successful survival in BD classrooms can be difficult. Adopting belief systems or mindsets that enhance instruction and facilitate hope, joy, acceptance, self-efficacy, and progress alleviates many of the difficulties."

There are a number of ways to overcome this belief in an affective "quid pro quo." One way is to give up the idea that the children will show appreciation for all that is done for them. Recognizing that they will try to get all they can while giving back as little as possible is a more realistic mindset. A second way is to remember "not to take it personally." The child's behavior is not specific to you. It is a result of past learning. A third way is to learn to "give freely" but not too much. Giving "too much" can cause the child to feel guilty and resentful.

Teachers who care "with no strings attached" tend to enjoy being with the students, and they frequently exhibit subtle behaviors that show that the caring is genuine (i.e., touch, intense eye contact, smiles, proximity, laughing, asking personal questions). Caring without expectations is "food for life."

7. Flexible Thinking—I Can Travel New Roads.

The mindset of flexible thinking means a willingness to entertain any strategy that might help students improve. This might mean giving up traditional thinking (i.e., "This is the way I have always done it and I don't want to change my classroom."). Flexible thinking changes "my way" to *any* way that works in the best interest of the student. In addition, this mindset will allow teachers to expand their own experiential reservoir.

Teachers with this "flexible" mindset are open to new ideas and suggestions, and approach students with a willingness to try new strategies even though the strategies may be unfamiliar and uncomfortable. The chances for success with students increase with a flexible mindset as more opportunities become available. Flexibility and success contribute to the art of classroom survival.

8. If I'm Not Making Mistakes, Then I'm Not Really Trying.

No one likes to make mistakes. Teachers who have a mindset that says, "I must be perfect," might find themselves unable to achieve classroom goals or to relate well to students. If teachers fear that "If I fail, people will ridicule me," then they may become incapable of performing effective instructional strategies. Having to be perfect is a self-defeating mindset; self-talk and disputation can help (Ellis & Harper, 1975). Thinking that "everyone makes mistakes and most people won't even notice the mistake" will prevent the teacher from giving up or becoming defensive and blaming others.

Teachers who accept their personal mistakes usually are willing to risk more by trying new techniques. They often open their classrooms to scrutiny, model self-acceptance, tolerate others who make mistakes, are free of fear, and become more spontaneous in caring for students. Survival with BD students and making mistakes are interrelated.

9. Keep Them on The Academic Track—Down Time Is Deadly.

Academic time-on-task is vital for successfully teaching students with BD (Morgan & Jensen, 1988). Students actively engaged in challenging, meaningful tasks on their instructional level will rarely have time for inappropriate behavior. Too much "free" unstruc-

tured time usually results in problem student behavior and seldom results in school achievement (Englert, 1984; Fisher & Berliner, 1985).

Teachers with a mindset that an academic focus is important will use a "no-nonsense" approach for assigning tasks. These teachers expect students to work and to complete all assignments. Class structure and routines are well organized so that students know the teacher's expectations. "Free" time is kept to a minimum and is contingent on academic task-completion. Academic expectations, structure, and little down-time make life in the classroom less stressful for everyone.

10. Pain Is Not a Fearful Thing.

Fear of being hurt by students is one of the quickest mental paths to burnout. Fear causes either avoidant or aggressive behavior in humans (Rachman, 1978). Neither of these responses promotes effective instruction. Furthermore, fear can promote depression and learned helplessness (Rosenhan & Seligman, 1989). Every classroom decision can be adversely affected by a fearful thinking pattern. The teacher might make decisions based on short-term reinforcement (e.g., fear reduction) for the teacher (i.e., expulsion and/or timeout), rather than long-term goals for the student. Even worse, this mindset is stress producing, never diminishes, and actually becomes stronger each time the teacher successfully avoids getting hurt.

It is necessary to change a fearful mindset in order to thrive with BD students:

1. Look at pain realistically. Pain, realistically, is a temporary component of life that happens to everyone at one time or another.
2. Adopt an external attribution style about the possibility of being hurt. This means that the teacher believes that his or her own failure is not necessarily the cause of pain.
3. Develop a plan to prevent volatile situations and to handle uncontrolled student behavior.

Realizing that pain is not due to personal failure, that it is transitory, and that it is specific to certain situations allows teachers to avoid excessive fear, depression, helplessness, and victimization (Peterson, Luborsky, & Seligman, 1983). Overcoming the fear of pain can make anyone more powerful and effective in intimidating situations.

11. Life Is Bizarre and Funny.

Humor is a necessary ingredient for classroom survival. Being able to find humor in difficult situations is closely linked to optimism. It is particularly important to be able to accept and laugh at one's own foolish behavior and at life's bizarre twists (Ellis & Harper, 1975). This often relieves or prevents depression, anxiety, and hopelessness. Additionally, Redl and Wattenberg (1951) advocated humor as a method for managing behavior with BD students. It is very difficult for a student to persist in aggressive or destructive behavior when he or she is laughing.

"Everyone is free to choose how to think. Working with BD students provides an opportunity to reject unproductive ways of thinking and to incorporate mindsets that release the ability to work, play, have fun, and survive."

Since humor decreases anxiety and depression, the student with emotional problems can benefit from the teacher's sense of humor. A sense of humor is characteristic of self-actualization (Maslow, 1954, 1971) and optimal living (Rosenhan & Seligman, 1989). Laughing can enhance perspective, perpetuate sanity, and make communication more effective. Teachers with a sense of humor are usually happy, relaxed, fun-loving, and reinforcing to others. A humorous mindset can be therapeutic for both teachers and students.

12. Think Straight. Flush Junk Thoughts.

Engaging in straight thinking can enable an individual to be happy and productive (Bard, 1980). Thinking straight involves disputing and changing thoughts that are irrational (junk thoughts). Ellis and Harper (1975) delineate three common junk thoughts:

1. "I must do well and win approval for my performances or else I rate as a rotten person" (p. 88).
2. "Other people should treat me considerately and kindly, precisely the way I want to be treated, and if they do not, they should be punished" (p. 113).
3. "Life, in general, should be hassle-free. I should get practically everything I want quickly and easily and get nothing that I don't want" (p. 177).

Ascribing to these junk thoughts will cause people to become unhappy, depressed, anxious, immobilized, impatient, and in Ellis' words, "crazy." Disputing them, on the other hand, facilitates one's feeling relatively fearless, empowered, confident, happy, and satisfied. A teacher who engages in rational self-talk (i.e., "I would prefer to be liked, but this is not necessary for my happiness") and who disputes irrational thinking ("Where is it written that life must be easy?") can more realistically assess classroom situations, change what he or she can, and accept what cannot be changed. This feeling of efficacy will enhance any relationship, but particularly difficult ones. So, don't worry, think straight, be happy, and survive!!!

Summary

What teachers believe about themselves, others, and the world in general impacts their behavior in the classroom. Successful survival in BD classrooms can be difficult. Adopting belief systems or mindsets that enhance instruction and facilitate hope, joy, acceptance, self-efficacy, and progress alleviates many of the difficulties. A dozen survival mindsets have been discussed.

By analyzing negative attitudes toward students and toward teaching in general, teachers may identify unproductive mindsets and may subsequently choose to replace them with survival mindsets. Self-talk related to the desired mindset begins the change process. Everyone is free to choose how

to think. Working with BD students provides an opportunity to reject unproductive ways of thinking and to incorporate mindsets that release the ability to work, play, have fun, and survive.

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Behavior Management Consultation Program (1989). In *Oregon's innovative approaches for students who are seriously emotionally disturbed or otherwise at-risk.* (p. 73). Salem: Oregon Department of Education.

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905 4th Ave SE
Albany, OR 97321-3199

Level:
Elementary
Middle
High School

Description: The Linn-Benton program provides behavior management consultation to constituent school district staff to assist with issues related to the management of emotionally handicapped and behaviorally disordered students. The overall goal of the Behavior Management Consultation Program is to help constituent districts enhance their capability to respond effectively and appropriately to the special educational needs of students who are emotionally handicapped and/or behaviorally disordered.

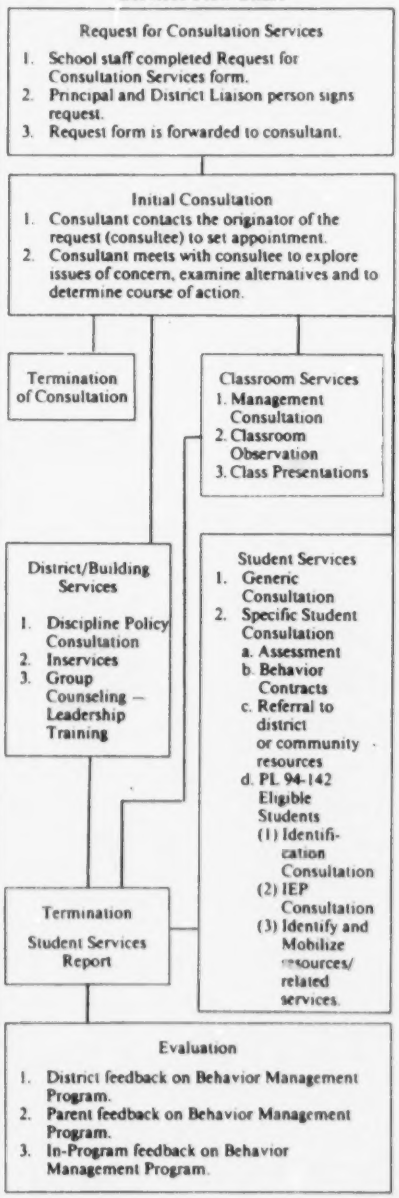
Role of the Consultant: The consultation relationship is viewed as a partnership between the district staff and the consultant. The consultant's role is to: (1) facilitate a mutual understanding and agreement regarding a definition of the problem or goal; and (2) provide information and ideas regarding options in effective approaches to solving problems or reaching goals.

Process: The intent of the consultation is to assist consultees in building on and strengthening their own capabilities by means of a shared problem-solving process. The consultant assumes that the referring school personnel, who may be teacher, counselor, aide, administrator or psychologist, is the one most familiar with the student or situation in question. Upon receipt of a request for services, the consultant meets with the originator of the request to agree upon a definition of the issue. The consultant may then play one or more roles depending on the plan of action developed in the mutual problem-solving process. Additional activities may include family or student consultation, teacher inservices, community liaison, school team planning facilitation and consultation.

As district requests for services far exceed the availability of consultant time, each district prioritizes service delivery by the consultant. The plan of action for each request for services is determined in accordance with the referring district's service priorities.

Results: The program has been evaluated as an excellent vehicle in prevention and in the resolution of problems before they become serious. In addition, this model can help prevent over-identification of students as handicapped, and under-identification as well, by providing cost-effective services to rural and populated areas. Staff report that over the years, the Behavior Management Consultation Program has assisted in developing the skill levels of staff members in effective intervention and interaction with handicapped, as well as nonhandicapped, students. In addition, the program has facilitated schools' development of school-wide management systems of benefit to all students in school.

FIGURE 3
Behavior Management Consultation Program Services Flow Chart


Request for Consultation Services
1. School staff completed Request for Consultation Services form.
2. Principal and District Liaison person signs request.
3. Request form is forwarded to consultant.
Initial Consultation
1. Consultant contacts the originator of the request (consultee) to set appointment.
2. Consultant meets with consultee to explore issues of concern, examine alternatives and to determine course of action.
Termination of Consultation
Classroom Services
1. Management Consultation
2. Classroom Observation
3. Class Presentations
District/Building Services
1. Discipline Policy Consultation
2. Inservices
3. Group Counseling — Leadership Training
Student Services
1. Generic Consultation
2. Specific Student Consultation
a. Assessment
b. Behavior Contracts
c. Referral to district or community resources
d. PL 94-142 Eligible Students
(1) Identification Consultation
(2) IEP Consultation
(3) Identify and Mobilize resources/ related services.
Termination
Student Services Report
Evaluation
1. District feedback on Behavior Management Program.
2. Parent feedback on Behavior Management Program.
3. In-Program feedback on Behavior Management Program.

Blair, M. E., West, R. P., Young, R., & Johnson, E. (1994, Winter). Statewide Technical Assistance Networks (STAN) for Teachers. *The Best Times*, p. 8.

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THE BEST TIMES

Behavioral and Educational Strategies for Teachers

Utah State Office of Education — *Winter 1994 • Vol. 3 • No. 1*

STATEWIDE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NETWORKS (STAN) FOR TEACHERS:

Making Technical Assistance More Accessible through Electronic Distance Education

— Martin E. Blair, Richard P. West, K. Richard Young, Emily Johnson
Institute for the Study of Children, Youth, and Families At Risk (SCIFAR), Utah State University

Those who work with children who display challenging and resistant behavior problems often feel frustrated and alone in their ordeal. These feelings are particularly intense for those teachers who are located in the rural and remote areas of the state where support services and technical assistance are not readily available. The Statewide Technical Assistance Network (STAN) for Teachers has been established to deal with these frustrations. STAN for Teachers is an electronically-mediated distance education system that employs an exciting new technology and standard telephone lines resulting in the capability of communicating and interacting with full-motion video and audio. Every site that participates can send as well as receive. It's almost like having a face-to-face consultation with every participant at each of the interacting sites.

STAN results from a collaboration of various state and local agencies, including Utah State University (The Interdisciplinary Training Division and Technology Division at the university-affiliated Center for Persons with Disabilities, the Institute for the Study of Children, Youth, and Families At Risk, and the Special Education Department), the Utah State Office of Education and its affiliated statewide projects, particularly the Utah BEST Project and the Utah Learning Resource Center, and several school districts (Cache, Davis, Tooele, Washington, and Weber). Presently, STAN is in session for two hours every other Thursday afternoon. More than 150 educators from participating school districts gather in their high schools or district offices (currently nine sites in all) and learn by listening, talking, sharing ideas, and offering solutions to problems that are raised by their colleagues. During the first few sessions, faculty and staff from Utah State University have reserved a portion of the time to introduce concepts and strategies pertaining to the science of solving problems with learning and behavior, including techniques such as functional analysis of problem behavior, opportunistic teaching, and other environmentally-based approaches. Participants learn that "if we always do what we've always done, we'll always get what we've always got." Therefore, to change the continuing problem behaviors of our students, we need to change the circumstances that support the problem behavior. STAN participants are preparing to share their ideas for accomplishing this for a broad range of challenging behavior problems. Currently, STAN participants are able to earn university graduate credit for sharing their problems with challenging behavior and offering solutions to others' problems.

Everyone learns who participates in STAN for Teachers. We're learning not only about solving behavior problems, but how to use the exciting advances in distance education technology. We're learning how to make instruction in such an environment entertaining, effective, and useful. We're learning about multimedia presentations, video capture, and other interesting techniques. If you're interested in attending a session of STAN, simply call Lila Geddes at (801) 750-3091 [797-3091 after March 31] for a list of sites, dates, and times.

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Success through communication. (1994). Readfield, ME: Maine Support Network for Rural Special Educators.

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SUCCESS THROUGH COMMUNICATION

> *Our biggest problem...? It comes down to warm bodies. We simply can't get them, and those we have we can't keep.*
>
> Hancock County Special Education Coordinator

Recruitment and retention of qualified special education personnel is a real problem in Maine, particularly in its most isolated regions. The isolation -- physically, intellectually, and emotionally -- is a major reason for leaving the field.

While seemingly an impossible task, Maine's Support Network for Rural Special Educators was designed specifically to begin to deal with this very difficult problem. The Network is founded on the assumption that teachers need support as well as challenge in their jobs, that collegiality is a necessary condition for professional growth, that teachers can play a powerful role is helping one another, and that structures need to be developed to allow and encourage such continued growth.

As a local director of special education commented:

> *It (the Network) can have a greater impact on the retention of teachers than anything else because it is the absolute grassroots, collegial approach. It is the single most important thing the Division of Special Education can do...*

Initiated in the fall of 1986, the objective of the Network is to diminish the high turnover of special education teachers in Maine's rural schools. Regional support groups have been formed in six sections of the state, three peer support and problem-solving sessions are held annually in each region, regional teacher academies -- based on needs particular to each region -- are conducted in the summer, and a statewide midwinter retreat, led by teachers from different regions, is held in February. Interest over the years has increased considerably with participation in the support groups doubling to tripling in most of the regions and over 300 teachers attending the Winter Retreat. Each regional group is led by a local director who is an experienced staff developer. These people are accessible and know the region, its culture, and its people. They represent diverse backgrounds with job responsibilities such as a director of special education, a teacher, a superintendent, a university professor, a behavorial management consultant, and a staff development consultant. The regional directors meet five times during the year to provide support and stimulation for one another, and to coordinate activities where appropriate.

After six years, the Network is clearly having an impact, as indicated by the following comments from participants, in response to the question: "What insights have you gained through your participation in the Network?"

> *The commitment needed to be/stay in special education and the opportunity for creativity/innovation in special education.*
>
> *We are all a very knowledgeable group of professionals; there are many people out there to help -- just seek.*
>
> *That I am not alone.*
>
> *I learned a variety of resources that would benefit me as a "rural" resource teacher.*
>
> *The Network is working. Already networking is occurring informally as a result of the sharing and activities. For example, I have met with one of the members of the Network to help her through some professional hurdles. It is encouraging to know that when given the opportunity to share ideas and experiences, others really do want to listen and learn.*
>
> *I have not been witness to such strong bonding between professionals with similar needs prior to this time. Not only have I realized that there is hope, my awareness of the severe needs in my district has increased to an uncomfortable degree. Hopefully, with the support of the group, awareness will be the first step to improvement.*

The most obvious result is a lessening of feelings of isolation. The support goes further, however, to specific sharing of resources and teaching strategies that are helping participating teachers not only feel better, but do better in their jobs. More extensive learning of skills or knowledge was initiated in the summer academies, and has been further developed through follow-up support sessions during the year.

The project, though designed specifically to meet the needs of Maine's special educators, has applicability elsewhere, particularly in rural regions. The basic structure, processes, and materials used could easily be replicated.

For information about the Network, please contact the Network Office:

Maine Support Network for Rural Special Educators
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Chalfant, J. C., & Pysh, M. V. (1988). *Prospectus Teacher Assistance Teams: A Support system for classroom teachers.* Salt Lake City: Utah Learning Resource Center.

MATERIAL NOT COPYRIGHTED

PROSPECTUS

TEACHER ASSISTANCE TEAMS:

A SUPPORT SYSTEM FOR CLASSROOM TEACHERS

James C. Chalfant
College of Education
The University of Arizona
Tucson, Arizona

Margaret Van Dusen Pysh
The Northern Suburban Special Education District
Highland Park, Illinois

Compiled by the Utah Learning Resource Center, 1988

CO CO/TAT/TAT SUP SYS CLASS TEACHERS

TEACHER ASSISTANCE TEAM_____A MODEL FOR SUPPORTING REGULAR CLASSROOM TEACHERS

The Teacher Assistance Team model (TAT) is a system for within building problem solving by and for regular classroom teachers. It is based on the belief that teachers have the skills and knowledge to effectively teach many students with learning and behavior problems by working together in a problem solving process. The goals of the model are as follows:

1) To help regular education teachers to individualize instruction to meet the needs of all students---normal, handicapped, and gifted.

2) To support teachers in mainstreaming handicapped students.

3) To provide an efficient pre-referral screening for special education services.

The system is designed to provide prompt, accessible support to teachers. Teachers refer students with problems to a team of three elected teachers within the building. The team and the referring teacher jointly engage in a structured process of conceptualizing the problem, brainstorming solutions, and planning interventions. Parents, students, and other specialists participate in some cases. A series of follow-up meetings are held to evaluate the student's progress and to plan further intervention. When appropriate, students are referred to special education.

The model is very cost-effective. It has been designed to minimize time and paperwork requirements. No additional staff need to be hired. It has been shown to be effective in a wide variety of school districts ranging from metropolitan to rural areas.

The Teacher Assistance Team model was developed by James C. Chalfant, University of Arizona and Margaret Van Dusen Pysh, The Northern Suburban Special Education District in Highland Park, Illinois. The original concept and teams were established with the guidance and support of Mr. Kenneth Crowell, former Superintendent and Dr. Robert Moultrie, former Pupil Personnel Director in District 108, Highland Park, Illinois. The model was developed further and evaluated in Arizona, Nebraska, Illinois from 1978-1980 under a grant from the Department of Education, Bureau of Education for the Handicapped, Division of Personnel Preparation. To date the Teacher Assistance Team Model has has been implemented in 10 states and 4 provinces of Canada.

Materials and training are available to help other districts adopt the model and adapt it to their situation. This Prospectus has been prepared to help potential adopters match the model to their local needs, conditions, characteristics, and resources. The following pages summarize the evaluation, describe the program in a question and answer format, and describe the materials and training that are available to support replication, as follows:

•Summary of Effectiveness	p. 2	•Team Operating Procedures	p. 5	•Impact of TAT	p. 12
•Goals of TAT	p. 3	•Developing Teams	p. 8	•Materials Available	
•Team Composition	p. 4	•Cost of TAT	p. 11		

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SUMMARY OF EFFECTIVENESS_____TEACHER ASSISTANCE TEAMS

The Teacher Assistance Team model was field tested and evaluated in 15 schools (K-9) in three states under a grant from the Office of Special Education, Division of Personnel Preparation. The full final report from that project is available from the developer. The results are summarized below as four claims of effectiveness. The first three claims correspond to the major goals of the program.

1) Teacher Assistance Teams help teachers to establish successful programs for students with learning and behavior problems.

2) Teacher Assistance Teams provide support to teachers in mainstreaming handicapped students.

3) Teacher Assistance Teams provide an efficient pre-referral screening for special education services.

4) The model can be effectively replicated in school districts with a variety of characteristics.

The first three claims are based on team records of objectives attempted and achieved for each student and on interviews with all referring teachers at the end of the school year. A student's problems were deemed to have been resolved if a majority of objectives had been achieved and if the referring teacher was satisfied that a successful program had been established and that no further help was needed.

Of 200 students served in 15 schools, the teams helped resolve the problems of 133 (67%) within the building. Of these 133, 103 were non-handicapped students, and 30 were mainstreamed handicapped students. All mainstreamed students referred to the teams were helped. Of the 67 students not helped within the building, 54 were referred to special education and found to be eligible for special services. There were no false referrals. The teams were unable to resolve the problems of 13 students (7%).

The above data were gathered during the second year of the program in 15 schools in Nebraska, Illinois, and Arizona. Teacher Assistance Teams were shown to be successful in very large suburban schools, in small, dispersed rural schools, and in schools in small cities. The program was replicated at these sites with training and support similar to that described in this Prospectus.

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GOALS OF TAT

What are the goals of the Teacher Assistance Team model?

1. To help regular education teachers individualize instruction to meet the needs of all students--- normal, gifted, and handicapped.
2. Support teachers in mainstreaming handicapped students.
3. To provide an efficient pre-referral screening for special education services, thereby reducing inappropriate referrals.

What other purposes does T.A.T. serve?

1. To facilitate communication among teachers within a building.
2. To generate a constructive, problem-solving attitude among teachers.
3. To increase teachers' skills in working with all students.

What assumptions underlie the T.A.T. model?

1. Regular education teachers have the skills and knowledge to help many students with learning and behavior problems in their classrooms.
2. Teachers can resolve more problems working together than alone.
3. Regular education should make every effort to resolve problems at the building level before referring a child to special education and labeling him as handicapped.
4. Teachers learn by doing; the best way to increase their skills is by helping them solve immediate problems in their classrooms.

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USER CONCERNS	PROGRAM CHARACTERISTICS TEAM COMPOSITION	MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR REPLICATION
Who is included on a team?	The core team consists of three regular education teachers elected by the entire school teaching staff. Members should have a) supportive personalities, b) the ability to communicate with staff, parents, and students, c) above average skill and knowledge as teachers, and d) willingness to offer time to help their The referring teacher and sometimes the parent and student attend the meeting. Special educators, other specialists, and principals may be requested to attend some meetings to serve as resources in specific cases.	The core team must be composed of regular education teachers. It is not recommended that principals or special educators serve on the team although they may attend in specific cases. Teachers are more apt to speak freely about problems and to actively suggest solutions with their peers than with their supervisors of special "experts".
Who acts as leader of the team?	Team members select a leader to take responsibility for the overall functioning of the team. The team leader's responsibilities include: a) Communicating information about T.A.T. to the rest of the school staff. b) Making sure operational procedures are established. c) Planning and conducting meetings. d) Coordinating referrals and follow-up.	A team leader must be selected.
How long do members serve?	After the first year of the program, membership on the team is rotated with one new member replacing a former one each semester.	
How many teams are needed per school building?	In general, there is one team per school building. In larger schools, two or more teams might be needed to handle referrals.	A team should not serve more than 1 school.

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USER CONCERNS	PROGRAM CHARACTERISTICS TEAM OPERATING PROCEDURES	MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR REPLICATION
The referral process.	Referrals can be made by any staff member as well as by parents and by the students themselves.	
	The referring teacher submits a short referral form consisting of 4 parts: a) a description of the performance desired in the class; b) a list of the student's strengths and weaknesses; c) a description of what the teacher has already done to resolve the problems; and d) any relevant background information and test results.	A short written referral including these four parts must be completed.
Preparation for the meeting	The team leader reviews the referral to ensure that it includes the necessary information, schedules a meeting, and assigns a team member to observe the child in class briefly.	This preparation is important so that the meeting can be devoted to problem solving and can be kept to 30 minutes.
	Each team member reads the referral and analyzes the problem before the meeting. This reduces the amount of time in the meeting because oral sharing is not necessary.	
Conducting the meeting	A meeting about one student is completed in 30 minutes and includes the following steps. 1. Reach consensus quickly about the student's problem based on preparatory work. 2. Negotiate 1 or 2 objectives to work on first. 3. Brainstorm alternatives for intervention.	All steps are essential. Objectives, recommended interventions, responsibilities, and follow-up plans must be written.

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USER CONCERNS	PROGRAM CHARACTERISTICS	MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR REPLICATION
Conducting the meeting cont.	4. Referring teacher selects a few approaches to try and the team refines those approaches. 5. Establish responsibilities for action---who, what, when, how. 6. Establish a follow-up plan.	
Follow-up and evaluation of students.	The referring teacher is responsible for initiating the interventions and for measuring progress as indicated on the Instructional Recommendations form. Team members informally check on the success of the recommendation by visiting the classroom and talking with the teacher. A formal follow-up meeting is scheduled to take place within 2 to 6 weeks of the initial meeting. At the follow-up meeting, additional plans are made. The process continues until the referring teacher, team, and parent are satisfied that the student's problem is resolved.	An organized procedure for following up cases and making new recommendations is essential. A follow-up meeting must occur within 6 weeks.
How often does the team meet?	The frequency of meetings depends on the number of referrals. Typically, teams meet once a week for 1 hour or twice a week for 30 minutes. During peak referral times more time may be required. At these times, it is helpful to provide a release day for team members. One team can serve 20 to 40 students during a year with continuing follow-up.	

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USER CONCERNS	PROGRAM CHARACTERISTICS	MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR REPLICATION
What are the time and paperwork requirements of team members?	The T.A.T. model has been designed to minimize time and paperwork requirements.	
	Time. Each team member can expect to spend 1 hour meeting and 1/2 hour in preparation each week. Duty on T.A.T. should be in lieu of another duty such as playground, bus, or lunch duty.	Team members need 15 minutes preparation and 30 minutes in meeting for each referral.
	Paperwork. The referring teacher completes a referral form which takes about 15 minutes. An Instructional Recommendations form is completed during the meeting and includes objectives, recommended interventions, responsibilities, and follow-up plans. This same form is added to at each follow-up meeting.	Paperwork must be kept to a minimum. Except for the referral, all paperwork must be completed during the meeting.
	No clerical support is needed.	
What support is required of the principal?	The support of the principal is crucial to the success of a team. The principal can:	It is essential that the principal support the team in the following ways:
	1. Attend the initial training of team members to fully understand the program.	1. Attend the initial training.
	2. Arrange for times and a place to meet.	2. Arrange for a time and place to meet.
	3. Express support for the T.A.T. model to the entire staff.	3. Verbally support the team to the staff.
	4. Help teachers identify students that could be referred to the team.	
	5. Recognize the work of the team and of the teachers who have referred students.	

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USER CONCERNS	PROGRAM CHARACTERISTICS DEVELOPING TEACHER ASSISTANCE TEAM	MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR REPLICATION
How is the T.A.T. model organized at the district level?	Depending on the district organization, a number of administrative plans have been used. Typically the curriculum coordinator, inservice coordinator, assistant superintendent, or other administrator assumes responsibility for coordinating T.A.T. No new staff need to be hired.	The administrator who assumes overall responsibility for the program must be from regular education not special education.
	To assist this T.A.T. Coordinator, a Steering Committee is formed consisting of 3 team leaders, a building principal, a special education administrator, and the T.A.T. Coordinator. The Steering Committee meets once a month during the first 6 months to discuss problems and to develop district guidelines. The Committee meets every 2 or 3 months thereafter.	A Steering Committee should be formed.
What are the major responsibilities of the District's T.A.T. Coordinator?	1. To provide leadership in scheduling and coordinating training and orientations. 2. To monitor the operation of each team. 3. To serve as a resource to teams in answering questions and resolving problems. 4. To evaluate program success.	All of these functions must be fulfilled. It is not necessary however, to use the implementation and evaluation plans provided in the Manual.
What orientation is needed?	A presentation is made to principals at a meeting called by the superintendent. Trainers experienced in the program are available for this orientation. This orientation can also be done using printed materials.	Principals and teachers must be oriented to the program prior to training so that teams can be elected.

8

USER CONCERNS	PROGRAM CHARACTERISTICS	MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR REPLICATION
What training is needed to implement the T.A.T. model?	1. Orientation for the superintendent and administrators and orientation for teachers in each building. 2. One day workshop for principals and elected team members, or entire building staff. 3. Half day meeting of Trainer and T.A.T. Coordinator to discuss implementing the program and supporting teams during the developmental phase. 4. At least one follow-up visit by the Trainer to meet with teams and administrators.	All four steps are needed.
How many teams can be trained at once?	A team of two Trainers can work with 100 trainees at one session.	Two Trainers can train a maximum of 100 people at one tim One trainers can work with 30 to 50 trainees.
How is training evaluated?	Participants rate the training using a prepared form. Evaluation results are used to modify the workshop and to plan follow-up support.	Evaluation must be conducted.
How is initial implementation of the model monitored and evaluated?	1. Team receive an implementation checklist covering all the steps involved in getting the program into operation. 2. The T.A.T. Coordinator contacts all team leaders by phone 2 to 4 weeks after training to check on progress and to resolve problems. 3. The T.A.T. Coordinator makes monthly phone contacts with each team and maintains record of progress, problems, and assistance needed.	The T.A.T. Coordinator must monitor implementation to ensu that the team make a good start.

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USER CONCERNS

How is teams' success in resolving referral problems evaluated?

PROGRAM CHARACTERISTICS

1. At the end of the year, each team leader completes a summary of the number of students served, the number of objectives attempted and achieved, whether the teachers felt that a successful program for each student had been established, and the number of students referred to special education.

2. At the end of the year, referring teachers anonymously rate the value of the teams in helping them.

3. The above information is collected and analyzed by the Coordinator.

MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR REPLICATION

Evaluation of the overall success of the program in meeting the needs of teachers and students is important in making decisions about continuing and expanding the program.

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USER CONCERNS	PROGRAM CHARACTERISTICS
	COST OF TAT
What does it cost to implement T.A.T.?	There is no direct cost for operation of the T.A.T. model once it is established. There are some indirect costs in the time required of the Coordinator (about 2 hours per week) and the team members (1 to 2 hours per week). In addition, some districts have paid substitutes to provide released time for team members during peak referral times (1 or 2 days a year). The cost of training includes the time and expenses of the Trainer(s), Manuals for each team member, and in some cases released time. To pilot the program in 8 to 10 schools would require the following training: 1. One Trainer for 6 hours initial training and 1 or 2 days for follow-up (plus an optional 1 day for orientation. 2. Manuals for all team members.
How cost effective is T.A.T.?	The T.A.T. program saves considerable time and money by reducing the number of inappropriate referrals to special education. T.A.T. is an efficient way to increase teachers' skills and enable them to more effectively teach students with learning and behavior problems.